

## UAHC Biennial Report

## A Fine Conference and An Inspiring CSZ Ensemble

On February 22 through 24, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations held its Northern California Biennial Conference. Sha'ar Zahav was represented by President Leila Raim, Vice President Don Albert, Treasurer David Stein and our UAHC liaison Mike Rankin. Alex Ingersoll, Jerry Rosenstein and Catherine Wisniewski also attended, and our Ensemble performed at the Saturday night banquet.

The Dunfey Hotel (nicknamed "Bet Dunfey" for the weekend) in San Mateo was the site for this information-packed weekend. Events started Friday noon with a luncheon address by Lydia Kukoff on Reform Judaism's outreach programs, that is, the effort to reach Jews-by-Choice and children of mixed marriages, and various interfaith marriage issues.

The afternoon session included workshops on a variety of topics: outreach—with Mike Rankin as one of the speakers, volunteers, improving synagogue finances, developing new leadership, and staff relations.

Friday evening featured hosted dinners at the homes of congregants from Peninsula Temple Beth-El, the hosting congregation. Leila, Catherine and Don took advantage of this program which according to Leila "provided an excellent opportunity to learn from others and do some bridge-building for Sha'ar Zahav." Shabbat services followed at Peninsula Temple Beth-El.

Saturday was a full day, combining speakers and workshops. The breakfast presentation was by Rabbi Eric Yoffie, Director of

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## A Taste of Zohar

On Tuesday evening, April 23rd, at 8 p.m. at the Synagogue, Dr. Daniel C. Matt will be the second speaker in our 1985 Lecture Series. Dr. Matt, an associate professor at the Center for Judaic Studies in the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, will address the topic of mysticism in a presentation entitled "A Taste of Zohar." The whole community is invited to attend this lecture, for which there is no admission charge.

The Zohar, written in Aramaic in 13th-century Spain, is replete with the intricacies of Spanish and Provencale Jewish mystical theory. Dr. Matt has recently translated and provided a long introduction to a new issue of the Zohar published by the Paulist Press. This work has been critically acclaimed as being highly readable, intelligent and interesting.

Rabbi Nehemia Polen's review of this edition in the July 1984 *Genesis Magazine* notes that Dr. Matt "... provides us with a lucid introduction which places the Zohar in a comprehensible historical and theological context." This excerpt from *Zohar, The Book of Enlightenment* attests to the historical and literary eloquence which Dr. Matt's lecture will expand upon:

*'Male and female He created them.'*

*From here we learn:*

*Any image that does not embrace male and female*

*is not a high and true image.*

*We have established this in the mystery of our Mishnah.*

## Another Barrier Broken

This coming May, Amy Ellberg of Bloomington, Indiana, is scheduled to graduate from the Jewish Theological Seminary, thus becoming the first woman rabbi of the Conservative movement. There are more than 80 women rabbis in the Reform and Reconstructionist branches of Judaism, but, of course, still none in Orthodox Judaism. This advance came about as a result of an historic vote of the 1,150 member (Conservative) Rabbinical Assembly last month.



## In Perfect Harmony

PHOTO BY JOE PODOLOSKY, UAHC

Ensemble performing at the UAHC Convention, left to right: front, Leslie Bergson, Eric Keitel, Susan Unger, Jill Rose, Jonathan Funk, Harvey Bartnoff; back, Ron Lezell, Steve Elman, David Gellman; leading, Dana Vinicoff.



## Remember

to keep us up to date. If you've moved, changed your name, have a new phone number, or wish to add a listing to our *yahrzeit* or anniversary records, please call or write the synagogue office.

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Members of the Congregation receive *The Forward*. For a donation of \$10/year, nonmembers will receive *The Forward*.

All newsletter copy should be typed, double-spaced and is due on the 10th of the month. It should be sent to the Synagogue office, marked to the attention of *The Forward*.

Members of the Newsletter Committee are Alex Ingersoll (editor); Bob Goldware, Stephanie Hannaford and Irene Ogus (editorial and production); Allan Berenstein, Frank Hyman, Ben Schalit, Barry Siegel, Sam Thal and Alita Rosenfeld (distribution). *The Forward* is typeset by En Character.

**Display Ads** are \$15 per column inch for non-members and \$10 per column inch for members, with a frequency discount of 10% for six or more issues. Ads should be camera ready; any ads that require typesetting, camera and/or artwork will be subject to a one-time production charge.

**Classified Ads** are \$5.00 for up to 20 words, plus \$1.00 for each 10 additional words.

Payment must accompany ad and should be sent to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 220 Danvers at Caselli, San Francisco, California 94114, marked attention *Forward* advertising. The advertising deadline is the 10th of the month. *The Forward* reserves the right to reject any ad for reasons of taste. For more information on advertising rates and charges, call the Synagogue Office at 861-6932.

## Passover: New Year of the Spirit

I don't want to upset anyone, but Passover begins the new year. I know that all along you thought New Year was Rosh Hashanah and happened in September, or else you associated New Years with January and hangovers, but there's something you didn't know. When the Torah speaks of Rosh Hashanah, it says "Sound the shofar in the seventh month, on the first day of the month." Now, if Tishri was the seventh month in Biblical times, that would mean that Nisan, the month of Passover, was the first. (Actually, to confuse you even further, Tu B'Shvat, the new year of the trees, was also once considered a beginning of the year in Jewish history, but that has no place in this article. Speaking as someone who is happy to celebrate any holiday, I think three New Years is a great idea.)

In the nomadic and agricultural world inhabited by the ancient Israelites, it made a lot of sense to have the new year begin in Nisan. After the harsh winter, when new plant life is burgeoning is the most logical time to celebrate a new year. Even in our modern urban society, we feel the pull of spring, the flow of new life, the almost instinctive need for the fresh spring air to take away the mustiness of indoor winter living.

The tradition of matzah on Passover grew out of the need to clean winter out of our lives. Although our tradition gives us a powerful image of the Israelites taking matzahs with them out of the land of Egypt because they left in such haste that the dough had not time to rise, the historical fact is that matzah is far older than the

exodus from Egypt, and the tradition of eating it at the spring festival is widespread in ancient middle Eastern cultures. It arose (no pun intended) from the spring cleaning of the granaries and communal ovens, when the year's "starter" sour dough was thrown out, along with everything left in the storehouses. All that could be baked was the ancient flat, unleavened bread, probably the first kind of bread ever eaten.

Of course, as with everything else, there is a symbolic meaning for the cleaning out of the storehouses. Arthur Waskow, in his book *Seasons of Our Joy*, considers that Rosh Hashanah is the new year of the intellectual and ethical parts of us, and that Passover is the new year of our bodies and spirits. And just as, exactly half the year ago we threw the Tashlich crumbs of bread that symbolized our sins, so at Passover we burn and discard the crumbs of hametz to symbolize the ferment of our souls. He takes the analogy one step further, and says that just as leaven is necessary to create the bread that sustains us, so a spiritual leavening—pride, ambition, diligence to work—is necessary to sustain our lives. But once a year, we need to get rid of the leavening, and reduce ourselves to our basics in order to start out the spring of the year with a fresh spirit.

—Leslie Bergson, Chair  
Ritual Committee

## CSZ Copy Center Open

The Finance Committee is pleased to announce that it has approved the purchase of a new photocopy machine for the Synagogue Office. Equipped with auto-feeder and sorter, it can produce 22 copies a minute. Now all committees can have their publicity, flyers, handouts and other materials copied through the office, thus saving us the expense of costly outside copying. When you have something that needs to be copied, please contact Marilyn in the office. Material can be dropped off, or her hours are such that everyone can meet with her sometime during the week to arrange copying.

The Finance Committee is currently pulling together funding to underwrite this purchase. What a wonderful way to honor your Mother on Mother's Day, or your Father on Father's Day, or your. . . . Please contact our Treasurer for specifics: David Stein, 431-7541.

## New Members

The Membership Committee is pleased to announce that our Congregation gained three new members in March. A warm welcome to our members:

Sue Douglas  
Martin Kupferman  
Ed Tanovitz

New members are welcomed and honored at Friday night services on the last Friday of the month. By making them feel a part of our family, we can all help to show our new members that they have a valuable place at Sha'ar Zahav.



## Out of the Closet

Being "out of the closet" is a familiar phrase to most of us. The symptoms of being "in the closet" are also familiar. We feel that we have to try to pass, but then we are continually plagued with wondering if we are succeeding: so we avoid probing questions about certain personal matters, about our backgrounds, about growing up, about not sharing the same adolescent experiences. We do all this because of an intense fear of not being accepted—or of outright rejection—if we "came out."

We usually think about "closets" in relation to our sexuality. I am one of the lucky ones. I never had problems with my sexuality and coming out. There's more than one closet, however, and I've been in one ever since joining Sha'ar Zahav. What was I hiding? I am a "Jew by Choice."

The symptoms are the same. I tried to pass as having been Jewish all my life: I avoided too many details about my family background, about not having been a member of AZA, NFTY or Young Judea and not having learned the same songs at camp. Certainly, growing up on a dairy farm in upstate New York and being an award-winning 4-H member are not the epitome of the American Jewish experience. But my having lived in Israel for four years did wonders for my credibility—and helped upholster the walls of my closet at the same time.

Why did I try to pass? Who or what was I hiding from? I feared the rejection of all those at CSZ who were born Jewish—Jews by Chance.

The fear is real. Despite the importance to our congregation of gay and lesbian rights, of issues relating to sexism and women's rights, of the plight of Ethiopian Jewry and of so many other social and political concerns, I think that many of us are insensitive to this very basic Jewish issue which cuts across all categories. We suffer from the classic Jewish prejudice towards anyone who *chose* Judaism. They are just not members of the tribe. I understand this prejudice all too well, since I have at times been so into my closet that I have looked down on "converts" too. But enough, no closet is healthy—not for the person in it, nor for the community that helps build it.

In February, at the Regional UAHC Conference in San Mateo, I attended a seminar on "Outreach"—Reform Judaism's euphemism for extending a welcome to all members of the community who are not

Jews by Chance. At the session, I realized that my fears are trivial when compared to a story told by a woman at the conference—a Jew by Choice, and president of her congregation: "My husband still introduces me as 'This is the *shiksa* I married 10 years ago!'"

And what about our congregation? Most Jews and most congregations are forced to deal with this prejudice in the context of marriage and children. The statistics reported at the conference were astounding. Many Bay Area congregations reported a majority of families with at least one Jew by Choice, and similarly, their Hebrew schools had a majority of children where at least one parent was a Jew by Choice. Most of us at Sha'ar Zahav have not been thrust into situations demanding that we face this issue, except for those of us with partners who have chosen to be Jewish, or who are not Jewish but have chosen to be identified by the Congregation.

Is there a problem at Sha'ar Zahav? Yes, there is. Several months ago, Irene Ogus delivered a moving sermon in which she

### UAHC Biennial (Continued from page 1)

ARZA, the Association of Reform Zionists of America, and the luncheon program included a presentation on Camp Swig, followed by a message from Charles Rothschild, Chairman of the UAHC Board. Saturday workshops of interest covered aging, changes in Reform Judaism, ARZA and Reform Shabbat observance. As evening grew closer, however, the Sha'ar Zahav delegation became more excited at the prospect of the evening's events and stole into the banquet hall to hear our Ensemble rehearse.

**The Ensemble's Performance.** At the Saturday evening banquet, following all the introductions and acknowledgments, the Sha'ar Zahav Ensemble was the featured entertainment. They presented a short, powerful program of four songs: Shalom Aleichem; a Renaissance setting of the Barchu; Oisen Pripichik, a Yiddish folksong; and Al Kol Eileh, an Israeli folksong by Naomi Shemer. Their singing was superb. Many of those in attendance may have expected to hear a respectable little shul choir. What they got was an impeccably professional performance, and a little consciousness-raising. Jon Funk's introduction to the final song cited the special significance of the lyrics to us as

called upon us to examine our feelings toward the non-Jewish members of our community. During my few years with the Congregation, I have heard numerous comments like: "How could she know what's appropriate for the Congregation? She's not Jewish!" and "It's okay if he wants to run for the Va'ad, I'll even vote for him. But I'd never vote for him if he ran for an office—he's a convert!"

So what should we do? The first stage is awareness. The next is for those of us who are concerned to begin talking and sharing our experiences.

This month we celebrate the festival of Passover. As we prepare to sit down to the Seder table, we all might want to consider the following:

*The stranger that sojourns with you shall be as the homeborn among you, and you shalt love them as yourselves; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.*

—Leviticus 19:34

This year, David and I will be celebrating our eleventh Seder together. This year, I will not have to pretend to anyone, but nor will I be a stranger at our table.

—Alex Ingersoll

Gay and Lesbian Jews. A hush fell over the room, and the song was followed by a standing ovation. Finally, in their encore, Jill Rose taught everyone the Sha'ar Zahav version of Hiney Ma Tov.

Following the Ensemble's dramatic performance, the keynote address was presented by Al Vorspan, Vice President of UAHC and one of the leading international spokespersons from the Jewish community on issues of social action and human rights. His eloquent 45-minute presentation passed all too quickly. What everyone from Sha'ar Zahav will probably remember the most is the five minutes he spent discussing the importance of Reform Judaism's acceptance of Gay and Lesbian Congregations.

On Sunday, breakfast provided an opportunity for Leila and Don to continue discussions with Vorspan and Rothschild. The rest of the morning was devoted to a general business session and the election of regional officers. The conference closed with a panel discussion on contemporary religion vs. state issues, including an analysis of recent Supreme Court decisions.

By noon, the convention was over and attendees began their journeys home, or on to the Federation Telethon.



# So Ask Aunt Yente

Dear Aunt Yente,

Why do we eat matzoh on Passover?

Musing Muncher in Moraga

Dear Musing Muncher,

It's only fair. Look at all the free hagodohs we get from the matzoh companies.

O.K., so that's not much of a joke, particularly considering that the last time Aunt Yente took a free hagodoh, they claimed she was shoplifting. But nebbach, Aunt Yente doesn't *want* to answer your question now. Any seder you go to—even one in a Holiday Inn—there are three things they *have* to explain you, and one of them is matzoh. Of course you're going to a seder, so why should Aunt Yente spoil the suspense?

Still, Aunt Yente is usually willing to give her readers the benefit of the doubt (even when they don't laugh at her jokes); so maybe you are asking your question because you will be at your family's seder, and your family is so traditional that they like doing everything in Hebrew. But on the other hand, if your family is this orthodox, then of course they will follow the commandment of the Talmud, which says that the explanation of Matzoh and other key items should not be in Hebrew, but must be in a language of the people at the seder. But, maybe although they're orthodox, they make a mistake? (After all, look at the Orthodox position on women.) But if they made a mistake, wouldn't it be better for Aunt Yente to correct them than to answer your question? But then again, maybe they don't read Aunt Yente? Are they saying that Aunt Yente is someone who doesn't deserve to be read? Here Aunt Yente has done nothing to them at all, and they're slandering the name of a good Jewish woman! When you go to your fershlugener family's seder, tell them that not only is Aunt Yente not going to advise them in her column, but even if they send her a self-addressed stamped envelope she's not going to answer!

Before Aunt Yente gets any more agitated, maybe she should answer your question. According to the rabbis, we eat matzoh to remind us of the hurry we were in to leave Egypt. When the chance came, we got out of Egypt quick—so quick, we didn't have to spare even the few hours it takes for bread dough to rise. So, we just made the dough flat and baked crackers. The P.R. Committee came up with the

name "matzoh—the breakfast of rabbis," and the rest, as they say, is history.

So the matzoh reminds us that we should be in a hurry for freedom; when the chance for freedom comes, everything that we usually worry about, everything that is usually important to us, must be forgotten. Aunt Yente has a friend who came here from Austria almost fifty years ago; even today, she talks about her brother, who stayed on just a few months more to finish up some business. May God forbid that we should ever be put to such a choice; but if we are, maybe the matzoh can help us decide.

The Torah, though, doesn't stop at telling us to eat matzoh during Pesach; it also forbids us to eat bread during the holiday, or even to have *chumetz*—leaven, or things with leaven in them—in our house. And if the Torah says not to have it in your house, you can imagine what the Rabbis say. Not only must we get rid of any bread or cake, or just about anything with flour in it (except matzoh, of course, or things made with ground-up matzoh, like Aunt Yente's famous bouncing seder sponge cake), but on the holiday we have to use different dishes, pots, and silver, which have never touched *chumetz*. (For Aunt Yente, this means eight different sets of dishes. You don't see how? *Milchig* and *fleischig*—dairy and meat—sets for all year, and again for Pesach. You think this only counts up to four? What Yiddishe homemaker do you know who doesn't have one set for everyday and one set for company? If the rabbis forgot to mention this commandment, it's only because they knew they didn't have to.)

This is not all. Our *chumetzdik* utensils (the ones we use all year around) we can't even continue to own during Pesach, but must sell to non-Jews. Since most of us probably don't want to have to buy a new kitchen after every Pesach (although Aunt Yente will point out that if Congregation members paid as dues what they spend each year in Macy's basement, we could probably move to Grace Cathedral), the "sale" of the *chumetz* involves some very hotsy-totsy concepts from the ancient Jewish law of bailments (soon to be a major motion picture). If the rabbi who drew up your agreement knew her stuff, you'll get your frying pans back; but the suspense adds an extra little holiday excitement.

Askenazi Jews (that means most of you, *kinderlach*) are awarded one extra set of prohibitions: we are forbidden not only flour,

and the "five grains" from which flour is made, but also "kitneos"—essentially other things that can be made *into* flour, which then might become leavened. This means peas, beans, peanuts and other legumes and even rice which the Rambam thought was also a legume. (On the other hand, peanut oil is permitted, because it is different enough from the peanuts, which themselves could be ground up and leavened. Green beans, however, are not permitted. If you had ever tasted the croissants the Rambam made from green beans, you would realize what a temptation having beans around on Pesach could be.)

Do you think Aunt Yente is making fun of all these rules? Well, maybe just a little. But you know, Aunt Yente usually winds up following them, and—although she would *never* think of interfering in someone else's life—you could try to follow some of them too. Because why? Because even if all these prohibitions are not strictly necessary to keep up our interest in matzoh, or to remind us of the haste with which we left Egypt, there is still a good reason for them. Part of what we're doing here is what you would call symbolic; we sweep out the leaven like we want to sweep out all the parts of ourselves that have become, like risen dough, a little sour. Freedom from all the old habits and from a year's worth of routine can be as much a *m'chaia* as freedom from the Pharaoh. It's worth cleaning these away once in a while. And in the Spring. . . .

Aunt Yente was almost ready to get very poetic about spring and new life. But, *kinderlach*, Pesach is coming! She has to clean her stove and sweep away the crumbs behind her refrigerator; she has to start melting down her schmaltz (Aunt Yente does not appreciate those jokes you were just thinking), not to mention harvesting the wheat in her back yard to make into matzohs. So why are you wasting all this time of hers talking and talking, while she can hardly get a word in? You think she has nothing better to do than to talk to you?

Of course she doesn't. *Kinderlach*, have a very happy, and at least a moderately *kosher'n*, Pesach.

Aunt Yente

Aunt Yente will answer all your questions about Jewish law and ritual matters. Just write to Aunt Yente in care of *The Forward*, 220 Danvers at Caselli, San Francisco, CA 94114. Only a limited number of questions can be answered in *The Forward*, so if you want a personal answer, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. All material © 1985 Congregation Sha'ar Zahav.



## Social Action

# Incident at Soviet Consulate

**A** meeting of the Social Action Committee will be held Wednesday, April 17th at 7 p.m. at the Synagogue. The Committee is in need of "new blood" and is eager for ideas as to how we, as a congregation, can be more responsive to the critical social and, yes, political issues facing us today. I hope to see you there.

**Soviet Vigil Update:** As many of you know, CSZ is present at the Soviet Consulate on the second Wednesday of each month, from 11:30 a.m. to noon, to voice our concern about the plight of Soviet Jewry. Other individuals, organizations and congregations who are members of the Bay Area Council on Soviet Jewry (BACSJ) also carry placards on their respective day—to the general consternation of the occupants of the Consulate.

On Wednesday, March 13th, Richard Inlander and I participated in the vigil. Coincidentally, this was the day of Konstantin Chernenko's funeral, so we found the front doors to the Consulate open to welcome visitors coming to pay their respects, most of whom seemed to be people from other countries' consulates. As Richard and I completed our ½ hour of "picketing," we were met by the organizer of the BACSJ daily vigil, Rose Tamler, who thanked us for being there and indicated that she came by to "pay her respects." What this meant was entering the building and signing the name of a prominent woman Refusenick (a Jew attempting to leave Russia). Sounded like a good idea to Richard and me, so we put our signs away and headed to the front door to sign the names of Yosef Begun (another prominent Refusenick) and the name of Richard's cousin, who is also striving to leave Russia.

We stood in the foyer for a moment looking over the literature, including a USSR Press Release containing that day's speech by the new General Secretary of the Central Committee, Mikhail Gorbachev. Looking ahead, I could see a sitting room with a large picture of Chernenko and lots of flowers. As we proceeded up the steps, a Russian, whose arms had been folded across his chest and who would have perfectly fit Hollywood typecasting, spread his arms and said to us "No!" I explained that we only wished to sign the book and "pay our respects" as had been allowed the general public. He said that our motives

were not pure and that this was not for us... how perceptive. Over our shoulders, I noticed that the two S.F. policemen who had been watching us protest outside had followed us in. After one more abortive verbal attempt to enter, Richard and I looked at each other and decided to leave rather than cause an international incident.

So what came out of this? Certainly some excitement for us and the knowledge that other visitors to the Consulate know that the BACSJ is there and reminding the Russians daily that we will not quietly sit back while the rights of our Jewish brothers and sisters are deprived in the Soviet Union.

While this excitement cannot be guaranteed each second Wednesday of the month, please consider joining us for ½ hour (11:30–noon) to make our statement a little louder.

The next vigil is Wednesday, April 10 at the Soviet Consulate, Green and Baker. Placards are provided. —Ron Lezell, Chair  
Social Action Committee

## Houston Defeat

**A**lthough the "Gay Rights Bill" in Houston was voted down in a January 19 referendum in that city, the president of our Houston sibling congregation, Aytz Chayim, reports that the local Jewish community was very supportive. Their February newsletter details the community support which included sermons delivered by two of Houston's leading rabbis and extensive coverage in the local Jewish press.

A front page article and an editorial in the *Jewish Herald Voice* strongly urged readers to vote yes in the referendum, citing support of the Jewish Federation's Community Relations Committee, the Anti-Defamation League and the Zionist Organization of America. A full-page ad in that paper stated that the issue in the referendum was clearly "discrimination, not endorsement of any particular lifestyle." The ad was signed by 66 prominent Houston Jews.

While we were disappointed to hear of the overturning of the Houston ordinance, which would have prohibited job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, we are pleased to hear of the fine support they received from the rest of Houston's Jewish community.

## Education Committee

# Workshops on Mysticism

**A** series of workshops and lectures entitled "Tools of Jewish Mysticism" are being organized by the CSZ Education Committee. Each aspect of the mystic will be covered by a specialist, with a lecture or workshop planned for each month from March through August, 1985. The first workshop, "Calligraphy, The First Tool of the Mystic," with Susan Greenspan, was held on Sunday, March 24.

The following are scheduled as of this date:

- April—a lecture on the Zohar by Danny Matt (see the announcement elsewhere in *The Forward*);
- May—"Dance as a Mystic Tool" will be the workshop on the 26th with Lilly Rachmany;
- June and July—a two part workshop with Rabbi David Blank on Music and Prayer is scheduled for June 29th and July 27th;
- August—A lecture on "Attire and Equipment for the Mystic" will complete the series.

The workshops are scheduled for Sunday afternoon from 1 to 5 p.m. and the lectures are on Tuesday evenings at 8:00 p.m.—all at the synagogue. The number of workshop participants is limited, so make your reservations now by calling the CSZ office. A charge of \$5.00 to members and \$10.00 to non-members applies for each workshop; lectures are free.

## Candidates' Nights

**C**andidates' Nights will be held after Oneg on Friday evenings, April 12 and May 3. Members are encouraged to join us to meet the candidates for Office and for the Va'ad. Following brief presentations, there will be a question and answer period.

You will soon receive a mailing containing statements from each of the candidates, as well as information regarding absentee ballots. We urge you to attend the Congregational Meeting on May 5, but if you cannot, please fill out an absentee ballot request form and vote by mail.

—Jonathan Funk, on behalf of the  
Election Committee



## Rabbi Schindler to Debate Falwell

A debate between Rabbi Alexander Schindler, President of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and Jerry Falwell, an east coast T.V. preacher, will be a highlight of the UAHC/Central Conference of American Rabbis-sponsored Consultation on Conscience in Washington, D.C., on April 14th.

The Consultation on Conscience is the largest national Jewish convention focusing specifically on political and social action issues. Hundreds of rabbis, lay leaders, and other Jews committed to social action will come together for an intensive three-day conference to discuss Israel/American relations, the nuclear arms race, Central America, church-state relations, civil rights, Soviet and Ethiopian Jewry, and other issues. Participants will meet with leading senators, congressional representatives, administration officials, and Jewish leaders. Meetings will be held in the caucus rooms of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

Members of the Congregation who would like to attend should contact Mike Rankin through the Congregation office.

Mike will be there and will fill us in after he returns.

## Mazal Tov!

Congratulations to Rabbi Robert Kirschner on his appointment as Rabbi of Temple Emmanu-El. He became a good friend of Sha'ar Zahav as Assistant Rabbi of Emmanu-El, and we look forward to our continuing relationship with him in his new position.

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## June Conference in D.C.

The 9th International Conference of Gay and Lesbian Jews will be held in Washington, D.C., June 6-9. The Conference is being hosted by Congregation Bet Mishpachah and is held in cooperation with the World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations.

We hope that many Sha'ar Zahavniks will take advantage of the current low airfares and make plans to attend this exciting event. For those of you who have never been to a conference, the spirit and camaraderie is fantastic, and meeting gay and lesbian Jews from around the world is a real emotional high. Some highlights of this year's conference are:

- **Keynote Address:** Barney Frank, U.S. House of Representatives Democrat—Mass.
- **Workshops:** Holocaust: New Voices in the Rabbinate; Creative Parenting; Coming Out to Family, Friends; Creative Liturgy; Creating/Interpreting Life Cycle Events; Gay/Lesbian Rights—New Laws in Political Arena; Aging Gay Men & Lesbians; Physically Challenged Gay Men & Lesbians

## Support A Fund — Any Fund

Sha'ar Zahav's health is founded on a good spiritual and fiscal base. The Finance Committee wishes to remind all members and friends of the Congregation of the various funds that are available for your support. Any reason is a good reason for contributions: a birthday, anniversary, yahrzeit, simcha, etc., etc. You may specify which fund your gift is to be dedicated to. Our funds are:

**The General Fund:** underwrite the ongoing activities and committee programs of the Congregation.

**The Building Fund:** mortgage payments and building improvements.

**The Education Fund:** cover the costs of teachers for classes, books and learning materials, film programs, lecturer stipends, etc.

**The Harvey Milk Social Action Fund:** contributions to social causes that the Synagogue wishes to lend support to—for example, aid to the Falashas, Soviet Jewry, National March for Lesbian and Gay Rights.

**The Library Fund:** development of a reference library for our Congregation.

**The Phooey on AIDS Fund:** assistance of members and friends diagnosed with

- **Tour of Washington:** including a stop at the daily vigil for Soviet Jewry
- **Evelyn Torten Beck** (editor of *Nice Jewish Girls—A Lesbian Anthology*) will speak at Friday night services
- **Saturday evening gala dinner/entertainment extravaganza**

If you are interested in registering for the conference, please contact our administrator, Marilyn Hertzberg, for details regarding hotel accommodations, etc. The registration fee for the conference, including all meals, is \$160. Partial subsidies are available, but you must submit your subsidy request as close to April 1 as possible. We hope to have a very strong presence at this year's conference—hope to see you all there!

—Eric Keitel,  
CSZ Delegate

## Classified Ads

The Art and Wine Festival season is almost upon us. Marilyn Hertzberg's Shellscape will be participating at local and other Northern California shows with her seashell creations. If you'd like more information on her scheduled shows or others, please contact her at 547-3277.

AIDS and is also used to support AIDS-related educational and humanitarian projects in our community.

**The Prayer Book Fund:** underwrite the costs of writing, revising and publishing our prayerbooks.

**The Torah Fund:** purchase of a new torah and adornments for our Congregation.

Contributions are acknowledged by letter and in *The Forward*, and the person being honored also receives a card announcing the gift. All donations to Sha'ar Zahav are tax deductible.

**Gay? Lesbian?  
Jewish?**

**Not a member of  
Sha'ar Zahav?**

**A SCHANDE!**



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	10 Nisan 1	11 2	12 3	13 4	14 5	15 6
	Torah Study 7-10pm	Book Circle 7:30pm		Finance Comm. 5:30pm 775-4386	1st Seder	Congregational Seder—6pm Golden Gateway Holiday Inn
16 7	17 8	18 9	19 10	20 11	21 12	22 13
Torah Reading Class 5-6:30pm	Va'ad Meeting 6:30pm Torah Study 7-10pm		Newsletter Deadline Soviet Vigil Green & Baker 11:30am	Newsletter Comm. 130-E Landers	Candidates Night at Services	
23 14	24 15	25 16	26 17	27 18	28 19	29 20
UAHC Consultation on Conscience, Washington, DC Torah Reading Class 5-6:30pm		Book Circle 7:30pm	Social Action Comm. 7pm		Yom Hashoah	Yom Hashoah Service
30 21	1 Iyar 22	2 23	3 24	4 25	5 26	6 27
Rosh Chodesh I Israel Ind. Day Stern Grove Torah Reading Class 5-6:30pm	Rosh Chodesh II	Lecture: Dr. Danny Matt Taste of Zohar 8pm	Education Comm. 7:30pm	Ritual Co.6:30pm 631 O'Farrell, Fl.2 Newsletter Mailing 11 Grandview Terr. 7:30pm	Israel Indepen- dence Day and Service	Morning Service 10:30am
7 28	8 29	9 30				
		East Bay Lunch Group, Lenny 451-1850				

## April Yahrzeits

- (8 Nisan-3/30) Max Pechter,  
Father of Bernard Pechter  
(9 Nisan-3/31) Bessie Landesman,  
Mother of Jonathan Goldman  
1 (10 Nisan) Max Radetsky, Grand-  
father of Allan Berenstein  
1 Geraldine Minsky Rankin,  
Mother of Mike Rankin  
1 Gizella Weiss, Grandmother of  
Wendy Weiss  
4 (13 Nisan) Pauline Kohlhagen  
Cahn, Mother of Isabel Fishman  
4 Morris Witkin, Grandfather of  
Michael Barclay  
6 Robert Schwartz, Son of Gwen  
Schwartz  
10 Betty Litowich, Grandmother of  
Michael Lipson  
11 (20 Nisan) Josef Ha'Cohen Chesir,  
Grandfather of Daniel Chesir  
11 Marie Kaufman, Grandmother of  
Marianne Sussman  
14 Frank Blazewick, Nephew of Joan  
Blazewick

- 18 (27 Nisan) Morris Goldman,  
Grandfather of Jonathan Goldman  
18 (27 Nisan) Hans Rosenstein,  
Brother of Jerry Rosenstein  
23 (2 Iyar) Dora Fox Solomon,  
Grandmother of Elliott Toporek  
25 Irving Brill, Father of Lenny Brill  
Note: Yahrzeits will be read at services on  
the Friday preceding the Yahrzeit date.

## April Birthdays!

- 2 Victoria Berdon  
6 Roberta W.  
7 Judy Macks  
7 Gordon Osser  
12 Terry Rothchild  
14 Gershon Lieberman  
17 Diana Buchbinder  
19 Alita Rosenfeld  
20 Bill Ashley-Dobbin  
20 Lenny Brill  
21 Milton Mosk  
27 Nanci Stern  
29 Shirley Liberman

## Oneg Sponsors

During the month of February, Friday  
night Onegs were sponsored by the follow-  
ing generous persons:

- February 1—Renee and Marc Lipschutz,  
in memory of A. Martin Lipschutz,  
their husband and father, respectively;  
and in memory of Sophie Sagorsky,  
mother and grandmother, respectively.  
February 8—The Va'ad, in honor of  
the Congregation.  
February 15—The Officers, in honor of  
the Congregation.  
February 22—Don Albert, in honor of  
the CSZ Ensemble. Flowers by John  
Arnold, in honor of Jonathan Funk.

All you have to do to sponsor an Oneg  
is to think of the occasion and contact  
Peter Abinanti at 441-0276 or at an Oneg  
or leave a message at the Synagogue office  
(861-6932). The cost of sponsoring an  
Oneg is \$50 (partial sponsorship available)  
or you can also provide the food, flowers,  
etc. for a more personal touch.



## More on Megillah Madness

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav seriously outdid its social self on March 9 by putting together an absolutely incredible Purim party, "Megillah Madness III."

Without a doubt the highlight of the evening was the enactment of the Megillah in a rather untraditional manner. Luckily for us, Leslie Bergson was able to correct some of Daniel Chesir's misperceptions during his telling of the Megillah, allowing the revised version to be acted by Susan Unger as Queen Esther, Allan Gold as Mordecai, Steve Elman as King Ahashuerus, Joshua Howe as Haman and Catherine Wisniewski as Estelle. Backing up this great cast was the chorus line, consisting of Tiela Chalmers, Aaron Cooper, Jonathan Goldman, Steve Greenberg, George Lucas, Rosalinda del Moral and Catherine Wisniewski. Garry Koenigsberg, all be-decked in porcine persuasion, led a brilliant parody of a service, and had most of us in tears of laughter by the time he was through. Each year the Pageant gets funnier and more embellished. It really is difficult to imagine how this year's perfor-

mance could be topped next year, but undoubtedly the tradition *will* continue!

After the play, the rest of the evening was taken by game playing, eating, socializing and watching the Parades of Champions. Contests were held in the categories of best hamantaschen, best costume, best mask and best concept (A Shahr Bazaar original). The well-deserved prizes went to:

Best Hamantaschen—Steve Elman

Best Costume

1st prize—Allan Berenstein

2nd prize—Jeff Gillman

Best Mask

1st prize—Howard Bobren

2nd prize—Don Albert

Best Concept—"Hugs and Kisses"

Bylaws Committee Booth

At the end of the evening, the "rumor" that officers would offer up their faces to the highest bidder became fact. Leila Raim's assailant was none other than Catherine (by popular demand), who was originally aghast at the idea of throwing a pie at Leila, but after it was all over, was heard to jubilantly utter, "Hey, that was

fun!" Don was hit squarely in the jaw by a throw from the trusty arm of Alita Rosenfeld. Thanks to Don and Leila for allowing this bit of silliness at their expense to raise money for the synagogue.

The auditorium at the Medical Society Building looked wonderful with balloons and lighted arches adorning every table. The food was hot and tasty, and it was a real pleasure to see everyone turned out in their costumes to have a good time.

It took a united effort by everyone involved to make this party such a fabulous success. Committees did a wonderful job of making original and fun booths for us, the Pageant was unbelievably good, and the mood was festive and in the true spirit of Purim.

Special thanks and congratulations are deserved by the Purim Planning Committee: Chair Ralph Frischman, Bob Gutterman, Stephanie Hannaford, Judah Katz, Shirley Liberman, Mark Mendelow, David Shaber, and David Wasserman. This party will be long remembered...at least until Megillah Madness IV.









## Va'ad Report

The March meeting of the Va'ad was held on the 11th at the shul. President Leila Raim announced her appointments to the Fine Arts Advisory Panel and reviewed how well-received our congregation was at the Regional Biennial in February. In her administrator's report, Marilyn Hertzberg reviewed the preliminary plans for special events forthcoming, including Israeli Independence Day, Gay Freedom Day, and the July Leadership Advance. In his treasurer's report, David Stein presented the tentative budget for fiscal 1985-1986 and a summary of expenses and revenues for February. Mike Rankin, our liaison with the UAHC, reviewed his involvement in planning for the UAHC National Convention (happening this fall in Los Angeles) and announced the Consultation on Conscience Meeting planned for April 14-17 in Washington, D.C. Don Albert, our vice-president, announced that our synagogue administrator has a new contract.

**New Business:** The Va'ad had an opportunity to give feedback to the Bylaws Committee about the proposed bylaw amendments the Congregation will be voting on at the May Congregational Meeting. The Election Committee announced the slate of officers running in this year's elections, which will also take place at the May Congregational Meeting.

**Committee News:** David Gellman, reporting for the Building Committee, announced that new locks and a heat-limiting device are due to be installed soon, and bids for the modifications upstairs are in the process of being prepared. We are also the proud owners of a new copy machine. To continue their important work, the Building Committee is anxious to have new members join their committee.

The Education Committee announced an upcoming series on Jewish Mysticism, with the first lecture happening on Tuesday, April 23, at 8:00 p.m. The Rabbi Search Committee is hard at work reviewing applications received from rabbis soon to graduate from H.U.C. in New York and Cincinnati.

The Ritual Committee presented two proposals for the Va'ad to consider regarding spiritual counseling for the terminally ill and a policy for funeral and memorial services. These two proposals will come up for a vote at the April Va'ad Meeting. Three new members were presented by the Membership Committee to be voted into our congregation and lastly, the Women's

Havurah reviewed their plans for their March trip to the Magnes Museum and for their April 13 Blood Drive.

Want to know more about the workings of the Va'ad? Then come and give a listen on the second Monday of every month, 6:30 p.m. at the shul. This is also your chance to speak out and let your elected officials know what you think!

—Mark Mendelow,  
Recorder

## SFSI Volunteer Training Course

San Francisco Sex Information is sponsoring the 1985 Spring Training, a multimedia training course in Human Sexuality and Communications Skills beginning Saturday, April 20th in San Francisco.

The 50-hour training class includes films, discussion groups, communications exercises and speakers representing many areas of expertise, and a wide variety of sexual lifestyles. The course is designed to help develop communications skills and increase your knowledge of and comfort with all aspects of human sexuality and is valuable both personally and professionally. A relaxed atmosphere is provided in which to learn and gain the competence and confidence needed to be a volunteer at this non-profit information and referral telephone service. The training is based on the highly successful Sexual Attitude Restructuring program developed by the National Sex Forum and is offered to all interested.

To get more information about the training or organization, please call San Francisco Sex Information at (415) 665-7300 between 3:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. weekdays.

## Calendar for 5745/5746

### May 1985

Fri	3	Candidates Night
Sun	5	Congregational Meeting with Elections
Mon	13	Va'ad Meeting
Sat	25	Erev Shavuot Service
Sun	26	Mysticism Workshop: Dance as a Mystic Tool

### June 1985

Thu	6-Sun	9	9th Int'l Conference of Gay & Lesbian Jews, Washington, D.C.
Mon	10		Va'ad Meeting
Sun	23		Gay/Lesbian Freedom Day Parade
Sun	29		Mysticism Workshop: Music & Prayer

### July 1985

Fri	12-Sun	14	Leadership Advance Wildwood Ranch
Mon	15		Va'ad Meeting
Sun	27		Mysticism Workshop: Music & Prayer

### August 1985

Mon	12		Va'ad Meeting
Sun	18		Castro Street Fair

### September 1985

Sun	15		Erev Rosh Hashanah
Mon	16		Rosh Hashanah
Tue	24		Kol Nidre
Wed	25		Yom Kippur
Sun	29		Erev Succot
Mon	30		1st Day Succot

### October 1985

Thu	31		Int'l UAHC Biennial opens in Los Angeles
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### November 1985

Tue	5		Last day of Int'l UAHC Biennial
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**Gay? Lesbian?  
Jewish?**

**Not a member of Sha'ar Zahav?**

**A SCHANDE!**



# The SPRING WOMEN'S HAVURAH BLOOD DRIVE

is this month!

Saturday, April 13  
10 a.m. to 12 noon

Irwin Memorial Blood Bank  
230 Masonic at Turk

plus  
Baked goodies & friendly people

All women welcome  
and men who can give as well

## Ritual Calendar

Friday, April 5

First Seder Night

Special Parshah: Ex. 12:21-51,  
Num. 28:19-25

Special Haftarah: Joshua 5:2-6:1

Early Service, 6 p.m.

Saturday, April 6

Second Seder Night

Congregational Seder, 6 p.m.

Holiday Inn

Friday, April 12

Eighth Day of Pesach

Special Parshah: Deut. 14:22-

16:17, Num. 28:19-25

Special Haftarah: Isaiah 10:32- 12:6

Daniel Chesir and Eric Keitel,  
Services

The Torah will be read.

Friday, April 19

Yom ha-Shoah Observance

Parshah: Shemini, Lev. 9:1-11:47

Special Haftarah: I Samuel 20:18-42

Garry Koenigsberg and Leslie  
Bergson, Services

Friday, April 26

Yom ha-Atzma'ut Observance

Parshah: Tazria/Metzora,

Lev. 12:1-15:33

Haftarah: II Kings 7:3-20

Avner Lapovsky and Marilyn  
Miller, Services

Saturday, April 27

Saturday Morning Services,

10:30 a.m.

Leslie Bergson, Services

## May Preview

Friday, May 3

Parshah: Aharei Mot/Kedoshim,

Lev. 16:1-20:27

Haftarah: Amos, 9:7-15

Terry Rothchild, Services

Garry Koenigsberg, Sermon

Friday night services begin at 8:15 in the  
sanctuary of our synagogue, located at  
220 Danvers at Caselli in San Francisco.

## Contributions

Sha'ar Zahav welcomes all contributions, of all sizes, to mark any event, and to any of our funds. Contributions will be acknowledged in *The Forward* unless requested otherwise.

Donations were made to Sha'ar Zahav's funds in the past month by the following contributors:

For the General Fund—

Howard Stoll

Melinda Basker

Marcia Blachman, in memory of  
her father

Mark Drusin

Rabbi Myra Soifer, in honor of the  
Congregation

Jonathan Funk, in honor of Leila  
Raim's birthday

Mike Rankin, in honor of Alex  
Ingersoll's birthday

For the AIDS Fund—

Lu Chaikin, in memory of Gary Walsh  
Don Gordon

and our appreciation to Randy  
Weiss and Patricia Whaley for  
their Benefit Recital on February  
27, the proceeds of which went  
to the AIDS Fund

For the Torah Fund—

David Stein and Alex Ingersoll, in  
honor of the CSZ Ensemble

Krag Rjirdaal

For the Prayerbook Fund—

Mark Mendelow, in memory of  
David Levy

Donations to our account at the  
Community Thrift Store:

Eric Keitel, Allan Berenstein, Leslie  
Bergson, Alex Ingersoll and David  
Stein, Irene Ogus, Seth Charney,  
Len Epstein, Aaron Cooper and  
Walt Leiss

## Attorney

**David R. Gellman**  
**(415) 621-2966**

- Contracts & Leases
- Estate Planning & Wills

- Real Estate
- Business Law & Litigation

**Reasonable Fees**  
**Evening &**  
**Weekend**  
**Appointments**

**45 Franklin St.**  
**San Francisco, Ca.**  
**94102**

## 1986 Israel Tour

Asher Quell has recently announced that he is planning to lead a 2-week tour of Israel in August 1986, priced at about \$2,000 per person, from New York. Asher lived in Israel for several years, working as a professional tour guide, and led a tour following the 4th International Conference of Gay and Lesbian Jews held in Tel Aviv in 1979. Anyone interested should contact Asher at 130 Barrow Street, #401, New York, NY 10014.



## Officers:

**President,** Leila Raim  
**Vice President,** Don Albert  
**Treasurer,** David Stein  
**Recorder,** Mark Mendelow

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav is located in the Upper Market District of San Francisco at 220 Caselli at Danvers, which is one block south of the intersection of 18th & Market Streets. By public transport, take MUNI bus no. 33 (Ashbury line) to 18th & Danvers and walk one block south on Danvers to Caselli.

**Services** are held every Friday evening beginning at 8:15 p.m., with an Oneg Shabbat following services. Services are generally held on the last Saturday of each month at 10:30 a.m. – check calendar for each month.

## Va'ad (Board) Members:

Allan Berenstein  
Leslie Bergson  
Alex Ingersoll  
Allyce Kimerling  
Garry Koenigsberg  
Ron Lezell  
Cheryl Orvis  
Jerry Rosenstein  
Sharyn Saslafsky

## Administrator:

Marilyn Hertzberg  
The Synagogue Office is open Tuesday and Wednesday, 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., and Thursday and Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. At other times, please leave a phone message.

**Emergency Number:** In an emergency situation, the Congregation can be contacted outside of office hours by calling 864-0475 between 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.

## Committee Chairs:

**Bikur Cholim,** Rabbi Ben Marcus  
**Building,** David Gellman  
**Bylaws,** David Gass  
**Education,** by committee  
**Finance,** Tom Rothgiesser  
**Membership,** Allan Berenstein  
**Newsletter,** Alex Ingersoll  
**Oneg,** Peter Abinanti  
**Public Relations,** Sharyn Saslafsky  
**Rabbi Search,** Aaron Cooper and Leila Raim  
**Ritual,** Leslie Bergson  
**Social Action,** Ron Lezell  
**Women's Havurah,** Allyce Kimerling  
**Coordinator of Social Activities,** Judah Katz

## Data Managers:

Alita Rosenfeld  
Jerry Rosenstein

## Famous Ritual Chair Teaches Hillel Class

Recently, I was invited by San Francisco Hillel to lecture at a session of their course *Jewish Women: Roots, Roles and Realities*. My topic was "Women and Judaism: A Feminist Approach." The lecture was on March 12th, and the reason you didn't hear about it beforehand was because I was afraid that someone I knew would show up. I was very nervous.

The class went quite well—I didn't faint or run out of things to say. I found the topic endlessly interesting, both in my preparation beforehand, and in the class discussion. We talked about where we had come from in terms of Jewish background, our place as members of both the Jewish and feminist communities, our traditions with respect to men and women in Jewish life, and how they arose, and our options as Jewish feminists today. I learned a lot from the experience—not least of all that I can be quiet and let the members of the class talk—and if anyone's looking for a lecturer, I think I'd like to try it again.

—Leslie Bergson, Chair  
Ritual Committee

## AIDS Food Drive

We're doing great! Our Food Drive for the S.F. AIDS Foundation began many months ago, and the baskets are still getting filled up. We are still making almost weekly deliveries to the Foundation office for use in their residence program. Let's keep filling the collection baskets located in the Oneg Room with dry or canned foods, household items and toiletries. If you bring just an item or two each week to Friday night services, it will help our brothers immensely.

## New Education Series Tools of Jewish Mysticism

This Month's Lecture:

*A Taste of Zohar*

Dr. Danny Matt

April 23, 8 p.m.

## Women's Havurah

## Spring Blood Drive

The Women's Havurah is sponsoring our Semi-annual Blood Drive on Saturday, April 13th, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Irwin Memorial Blood Bank, 230 Masonic at Turk. This Blood Drive, which has by now become an institution at Sha'ar Zahav and in the community, is an important way for us to support our brothers and our community, and gives each of us an opportunity to make a difference. Last fall, 36 (double-chai) donors responded to this call; let's make it at least that many this Passover.

After we donate, we will hang out and visit with each other, and enjoy delicious baked goods provided by the Brotherhood. Plan to start your Spring off on a good note by joining us in giving the gift of life. Renew yourself through your gift of renewal to your community.

For more information, give me a call at 824-2074.

—Tiela Chalmers